

**Board of Finance
Town of East Windsor
11 Rye Street
East Windsor, CT**

**MINUTES OF BUDGET WORKSHOP – SPECIAL MEETING
Wednesday, April 14, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.**

These minutes are not official until approved at a subsequent meeting.

Members Present: Jack Mannette, Danelle E. Godeck, Robert Little, Kathleen Pippin, and Jason Bowsza
Members Absent: Marie DeSousa
Alternates Present: Jamie Daniel and Thomas Baker
Alternate Absent: None
Others: Denise Menard, Gilbert Hayes, Mark Simmons, and Kris Casico and a few other townspeople
Press: None

Chairman Jack Mannette called the Budget Workshop Special Meeting to Order at 7:00 p.m., in the East Windsor High School, Board of Education Meeting Room, 70 Main Street, East Windsor, Connecticut.

Chairman Jack Mannette indicated that Board Member Marie DeSousa is not in attendance and Ms. Jamie Daniel is in attendance and should be appointed as an alternate member.

It was **MOVED** (Godeck) and **SECONDED** (Pippin) and **PASSED** (U) that Ms. Jamie Daniel be approved as an alternate.

Chairman Jack Mannette explained to the Board that he has worked on the presentation for the public hearing; however, he had a technical problem with his computer and he was unable to print the presentation for this meeting. He informed the Board Members he will have the presentation materials available to them for the Regular Meeting and copies will be in their inbox at the Town Hall in the next day or two.

Mr. Mannette discussed a telephone conversation he had with Board Member Robert Little earlier in the day regarding the reports that Ms. Cabral had given at the previous meeting. Mr. Little indicated the figures on those reports were incorrect. In regards to the proposed budget, the report indicated a tax increase of 15.59%; however, when he did the calculation, he arrived at a figure of 16.11% increase. The 15.59% figure did not include the additional .5% tax revenue. When adding the .5% to the 15.59%, the increase is 16.11%. Mr. Little voiced his concern of having to double check those figures and indicated the Board counts on Ms. Cabral for the proper figures. He was hoping she was in attendance so he could discuss this further. Ms. Godeck and Ms. Daniel commented

the amounts on the report was correct, the only incorrect amount was the percentage of the tax increase. Mr. Mannette gave to all the Board Members a document entitled "Town of East Windsor FY 2010-2011 Projected Mill Rate With & Without Tax Shortfall". The document indicates a tax increase of 16.168%. A discussion among the Board Members was held as to how the calculations are made.

Mr. Little raised concerns of the present shortfalls in the current budget; such as, the gas and oil line. He indicated last year, it was budgeted for zero; however, so far this fiscal year \$27,000 has been spent. Mr. Mannette and Mr. Bowsza agreed this subject should be discussed at a Regular Meeting and not at a Budget Workshop.

A discussion began regarding each department manager and their responsibility to their own budget. Some Board Members indicated that First Selectwoman Denise Menard has been stressing at all staff meetings the importance of staying within budget parameters. A human resources consultant has been recently hired to help manage some of the problems within the departments. Concerns arose regarding payment for such consultant fees, which prompted a conversation regarding fiscal responsibility and jeopardizing audit failure for a second time in a row.

Board Secretary Danelle Godeck addressed the Board regarding her understanding of presenting a budget at a public hearing. She contacted the Chair of the Granby Board of Finance to inquire how they presented their proposal to the town. A pie chart showing the percentages of spending is a good tool to use for the public to easily understand where every dollar is allocated. Growth charts using expenses, such as, garbage and utilities as well as salaries and benefits should be presented to show the rising costs of all expenses, not only salaries and benefits. Mr. Mannette responded that in his past experience, graph charts show a picture or a story, spending versus general fund. Currently, the town is not growing and expenses are rising, including salaries and benefits.

A lengthy discussion between Mr. Mannette and Ms. Godeck regarding contractual obligations and town growth and the effects those elements have on the budget. Mr. Little and Mr. Bowsza joined the conversation discussing the past ten years and how the budget and tax revenues have changed.

Mr. Mannette voiced his disappointment regarding the Board of Education proposed budget. He indicated within that budget, salaries and benefits are approximately 11% higher and expenses are down approximately 5%. His opinion is the salaries and benefits expenses are taking away from the students for supplies and other educational needs. He indicated last year, the Board of Education requested a 3.76% increase and this year, the request is even higher 4.02%. Mr. Bowsza and Ms. Godeck indicated savings of approximately \$400,000 in transportation costs and some of those funds have been put back to supplies for students. Ms. Godeck commented the salaries and benefits are rising due to the contractual obligations and are unavoidable. Mr. Mannette remarked if the funds are not available to support such salaries and benefits to the town employees, layoffs may have to be considered. The conversation continued regarding Board of Education salaries and benefits and other expenses which are on the rise.

After the conversations, it was decided that at the next meeting, Mr. Mannette will explain to the Board what he will be presenting, including pie charts and graphs, to the public at the public hearing.

Ms. Kris Casico asked if she could speak to the Board of Finance. She posed a question to the Board asking in the proposed budget if any of the town employees were getting raises and she wanted to know why. She was told some employees were, due to contractual obligations and if she would like more information, it will be presented at the public hearing on April 26, 2010.

It was **MOVED** (Little) and **SECONDED** (Bowsza) and **PASSED** (U) that the Board of Finance adjourns the April 14, 2010 Budget Workshop Special Meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Denise M. Piotrowicz
Recording Secretary